

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes _____
no X

Property Name: Samuel G. Ready School for Girls Inventory Number: B-5103
Address: 5150 Baltimore National Pike Historic district: yes X no
City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21229 County: Baltimore City
USGS Quadrangle(s): Baltimore West
Property Owner: First United Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic Tax Account ID Number: 28057993E001
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): _____ Tax Map Number: 28
Project: Red Line Corridor Transit Study Agency: Mass Transit Administration
Agency Prepared By: John Milner Associates, Inc.
Preparer's Name: Katherine Larson Farnham Date Prepared: 8/12/2005

Documentation is presented in: Enoch Pratt Free Library Maryland Room vertical files; University of Baltimore Archives, Samuel G. Ready Collection; Frances S. Meginniss, Samuel G. Ready: The Man and His Legacy (Baltimore: University of Baltimore Dept. of Special Collections, 1987.

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: _____ Eligibility recommended X Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:

Name of the District/Property: _____

Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: _____ yes Listed: _____ yes

Site visit by MHT Staff yes X no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

The Samuel G. Ready School for Girls campus now houses the Transformation Church of Jesus Christ. The campus is a gently sloped area with open fields on the east and a number of mature trees on its western side. There are two ca. 1938 buildings on the 12-acre campus: a main school building and a small frame dwelling, both facing south toward Baltimore National Pike. To the east-northeast of the older buildings are a 1965 gymnasium and art studio building now used by the church and, further northeast, modern multistory institutional housing used for a retirement home. A large parking lot for the church adjoins the main building to the east. The grounds are otherwise open lawns with many trees. A circular drive in front of the main building contains a clipped circular hedge inside the circle. The campus slopes gradually toward the north.

The main building is a two-and-one-half-story stone-faced Georgian Colonial Revival structure, fifteen bays wide and thirteen bays deep. According to Sanborn maps, this building is laid out in a U-shape surrounding a central courtyard space, but this feature is not evident from the street front. A lower wing spans the open side of the U on the north and connects the building to an auditorium, which extends north from the connector wing. The building has a symmetrical façade with a center entrance bay. The

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended _____ Eligibility not recommended X

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MHT Comments:

Jim Juliano
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

3/31/10
Date

B. Kintz
Reviewer, National Register Program

4/8/10
Date

fieldstone is a variety of light shades of brown and gray, laid in random courses and trimmed with carved limestone. The asphalt-shingled roof is hipped with slightly projecting front-gabled pavilions at each end of the front façade. Between the pavilions are three widely-spaced front-gabled dormers with segmental-arched rooflines and six-over-six vinyl replacement windows. Windows on the second floor of the building have six-over-six sash, and windows on the first floor have taller nine-over-six sash. All windows are vinyl replacement windows. A short, wide brick chimney projects from the rear slope of the roof above the entrance bay. Limestone belt courses run across the façade, with a wide band below the second floor windows and a narrower band at sill level on the first floor. Another wide band runs around the building between the basement and first floor levels. The central entrance bay is faced entirely with limestone and projects slightly from the front wall. The entrance is a modern brown steel and glass double-leaf door with a transom, set within a segmental arched opening. The door is sheltered by a shallow stone entry porch with plain Doric columns supporting a small balcony. Small stone urns are set on the corner blocks of the low solid stone balustrade of the balcony. The single window above the balcony has a stone surround with fluted pilasters on each side. Larger stone urns are set at the bottom of the shallow front steps leading to the porch. On each side of the entrance, the façade has four bays. The end pavilions are each three bays wide and have full gable returns with a demilunette gable window. The center bay of each pavilion has a longer window on the second floor which provides access to a small, shallow wrought-iron balcony. Each side façade has a wide center projection that is eleven bays wide and contains two single-door entrances. At the rear of the building, extending toward the north, is a large auditorium that is the same height as the rest of the building but has a two-story interior. The side windows of the auditorium are mullioned into several sections with round-arched tops. Other than window and door replacement, the building façade appears to be intact from the time of construction.

To the west of the main building is a one-and-one-half-story, side-gabled frame Cape Cod dwelling. This house is three bays wide and two bays deep, and has a slate roof with a large center chimney and two gabled dormers in front. It is sided with white clapboard and has six-over-six wooden double-hung windows. The front door is a wooden six-panel "cross and bible" door. The house appears to be in original condition.

The Samuel G. Ready School was founded as a residential school for orphaned female children. In this era, "orphan" could mean a child who still had one living parent, but was of a social class where loss of one parent had devastating financial consequences for the surviving family members. It was funded by the bequest of Samuel J. Ready (1789-1871). Ready was a well-to-do Baltimore sailmaker and lumber merchant who was appalled by the plight of young orphaned girls he saw picking scrap wood at his lumberyard, and left a large bequest to help such girls through the founding of a boarding school for them. A board of trustees was established and purchased an estate called Belmont at North Ave. and Harford Rd., which had been the former home of Chevalier d'Anmour, the French consul to Baltimore during the Revolutionary War era, and the school opened as the Samuel Ready School for Female Orphans in 1887. At first, the Ready School was an unusual combination of an orphanage and a school. Emphasis was placed on providing students the education and training they needed to support themselves independently. Typing, stenography, sewing, dressmaking, cooking, and housekeeping skills were taught along with classical studies. Graduates of the school were successful in securing employment in various fields, and the school gained an excellent reputation. Some girls were even sent on to higher education through scholarships. The girls were taken on cultural excursions and participated in the upkeep of the school through assigned chores. The name of the school was later changed to the Samuel Ready School for Girls. The school expanded to over 70 pupils and remained at Belmont until the 1930s. In 1932, the trustees began charging a \$50 annual fee to all students able to pay. Further change was imminent. In early 1937, the trustees accepted an offer from Sears Roebuck to buy Belmont. The neighborhood was becoming increasingly commercial and the offer was sufficient to provide for a new location and building superior to what they had already. A new 22-acre site was found on the far western edge of the city, and the cornerstone for the new main building was laid in April 1938.

The new site had been the McKim family estate called Brunswick Park, and was used as a summer home until 1908, when the

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Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

Date

Reviewer, National Register Program

Date

McKims lost their fortune in a bank panic. The estate was then purchased by the McAvoy family, which later conveyed it to the Ready School trustees. The McKim house stood between the current school building and Cook's Lane. The new school's Georgian-style main building had upstairs rooms for 80 girls, plus classrooms, a library, a dining hall and kitchen, various offices and parlors, a basement gymnasium, and an auditorium. It opened in the fall of 1938. The adjacent Cape Cod cottage was constructed in 1938 as the school engineer's house, served for a time as the home of the headmistress, and then as the home of the caretaker of the campus. By the 1940s, the school's endowment was no longer sufficient to cover the rising costs of operating and in 1947, the trustees took the step of charging full tuition for those able to afford it. The school also began to admit day students, most of whom were paying full price. Vocational skills decreased in importance, while academic subjects were stressed. The school began to function more like an elite college-preparatory private school. Students began wearing uniforms in the 1950s, and in 1964-1965, the Boyce Center was constructed to house a gymnasium, art and music studios, and an apartment for the headmistress. A few years later, the Crosby School in Catonsville closed and the trustees amended the school charter to admit male students up to the fourth grade. However, inflation and the increased costs of diversifying the academic curriculum put mounting financial pressure on the school. The boarding option was phased out in 1974, but the fiscal crunch continued, which larger deficits each year. In 1977, despite parental objections, the school trustees made the wrenching decision to close the school, sell the property, and funnel the remaining endowment into a scholarship fund. The organization's name was changed to Samuel J. Ready Scholarships, Inc. The school's archival collection was given to the University of Baltimore. Events following that are not documented, but it appears that the school property was sold to a large black evangelical church, which built a retirement home at the back of the property and renovated the buildings for its own use.

The Samuel G. Ready School was a somewhat radical force and a significant landmark in the education of poor females during its early period, but by the 1930s, it had become less remarkable. Thus, the period of time it spent on Baltimore National Pike was not particularly significant in terms of educational or social history, and was marked primarily by fiscal difficulties and increased conformity with other private schools in the area. Its surviving buildings, though attractive, are revival-style structures that are neither particularly distinctive nor typical of a girls' school campus, and the stately main building has lost its original windows to vinyl replacements. It does not appear to meet any NRHP criteria and is recommended not eligible.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

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MHT Comments:

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services_____
Date_____
Reviewer, National Register Program_____
Date

(ELLICOTT CITY)

352

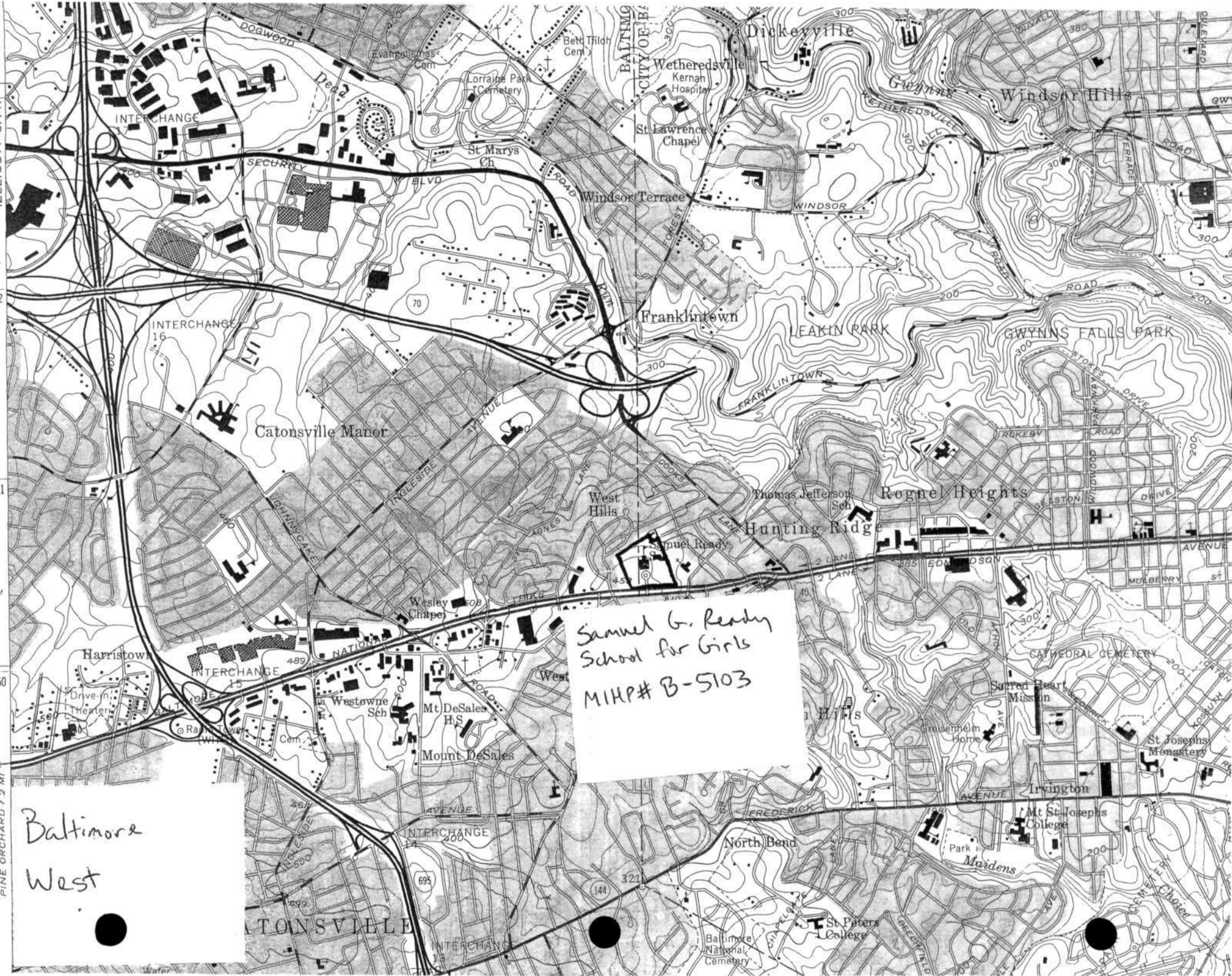
1351

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FREDERICK 38 MI.
PINE ORCHARD 12 MI.

Baltimore
West



B-5103

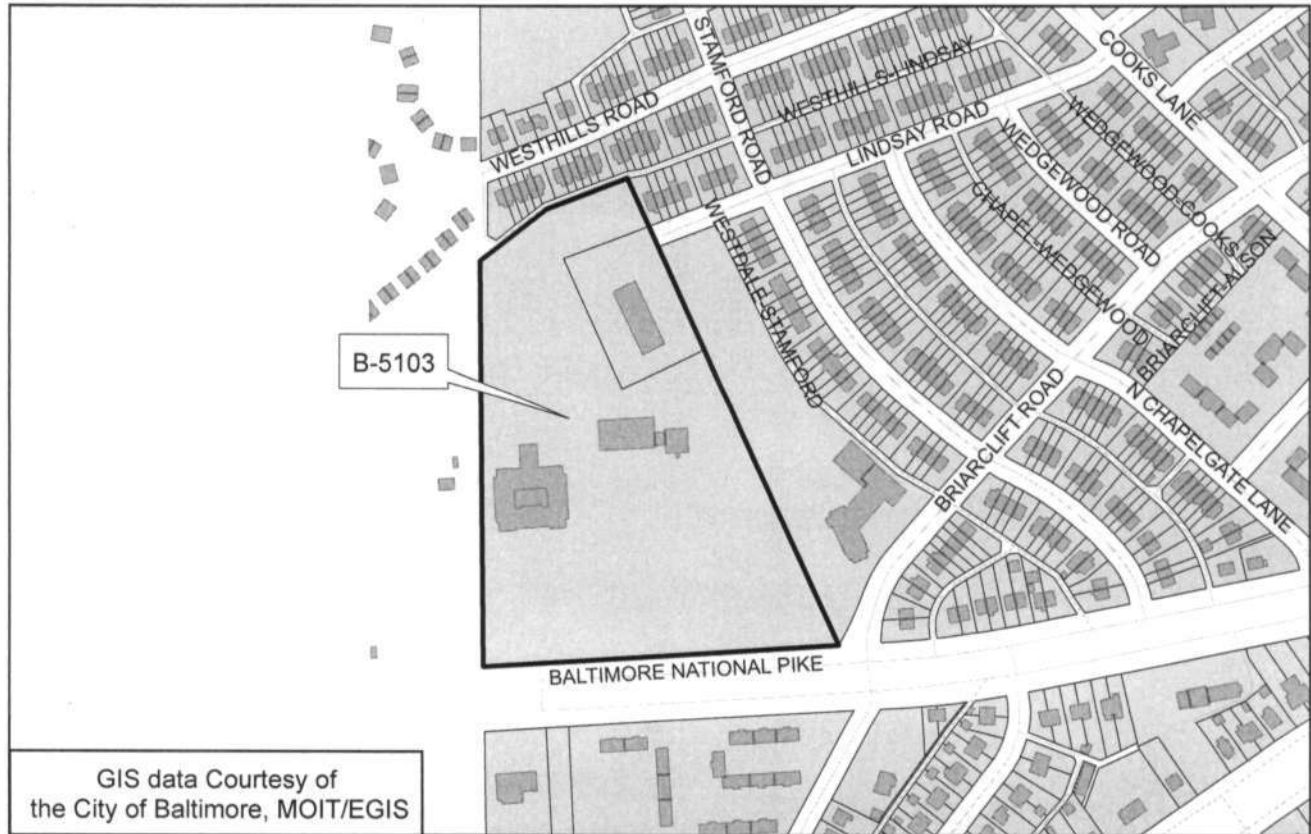
Samuel G. Ready School for Girls, Transformation Church of Jesus Christ

5150 Baltimore National Pike (US 40)

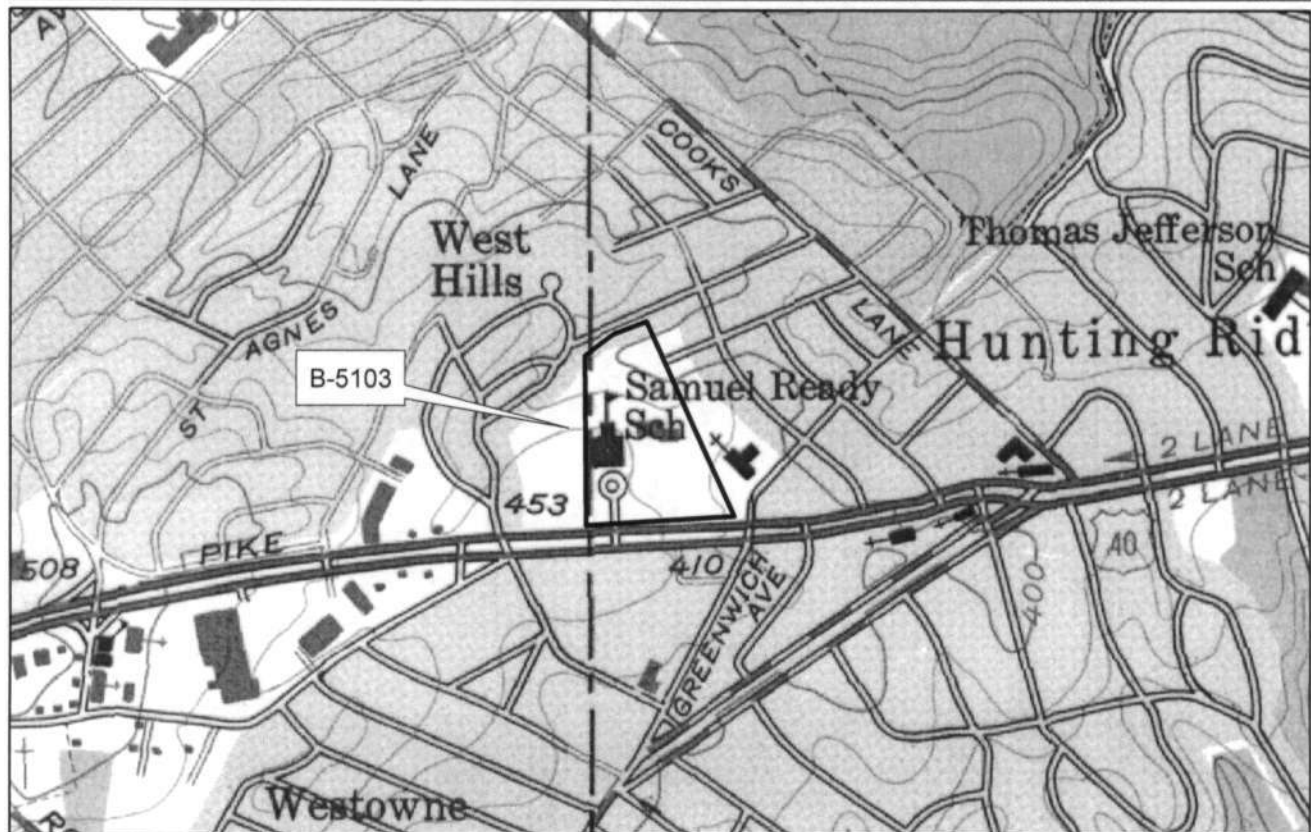
Block 7993E Lots 001-002

Baltimore City

Baltimore West Quad



GIS data Courtesy of
the City of Baltimore, MOIT/EGIS





B-5103

Samuel G. Ready
School for Girls

Baltimore City,
Maryland

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View north of front (south)
facade, from Route
of main bldg. 410
area

#1 of 13

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B-5103

Samuel G. Ready
School for Girls
Baltimore City,
Maryland

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View of ~~main building~~ southwest
corner of main
building

#2 of B

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B-5103

Samuel G. Ready
School for Girls

Baltimore City,
Maryland

Renée Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View of southeast corner
of ~~main building~~ of
main building

3 of 13

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B-5103

Samuel G. Ready
School for Girls
Baltimore City,
Maryland

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD STPO

View of ~~condemned~~ northeast
facade of main
bldg.

#4 of 13

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B-5103

Samuel G. Raddy
School for Girls
Baltimore City,
Maryland

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View of north (rear)
facade of main
building

#5 of 13

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B-5103

Samuel G. Ready
School for Girls
Baltimore City,
Maryland

Renée Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View of north (rear)
facade of main
building

#6 of 13

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B- 5103

Samuel G. Ready
School for Girls

Baltimore City,
Maryland

Renie Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View of northwest
corner of main
building

#7 of 13

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B-5103

Samuel G. Ready
School for Girls
Baltimore City,
Maryland

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View of main facade (south)
of frame dwelling
(c. 1938)

#8 of 13

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B-5103

Samuel G. Ready
School for Girls

Baltimore City,
Maryland

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View of rear (north)
facade of frame
dwelling (c. 1938)

9 of 13

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Samuel G. Ready
School for Girls

Baltimore City,
Maryland

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View of south (front)
facade of 1965 gymnasium
and art studio

#10 of 13

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2072 012 N N N N N N-38 AC-06 SA107 GRCB / 079 / 100.0



B-5103

Samuel G. Ready
School for Girls

Baltimore City,
Maryland

Renée Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View of north (rear)
facade of 1965 gymnasium
and art studio

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B-5103

Baltimore City,
Maryland

Samuel G. Ready
School for Girls

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View looking north
of retirement home
in distance behind
1965 gymnasium
#12 of 13

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Samuel G. Ready
School for Girls

Baltimore City,
Maryland

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View of main (east)
facade of retirement
home

#13 of 13

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